MARVEL® COMICS

EXILES®

MARVEL PG 6

MCKONE · MCKENNA · CHU

SIX STRANGERS, EACH AN X-MAN FROM A DIFFERENT REALITY, BROUGHT TOGETHER TO INSURE THAT LIFE AS WE KNOW IT DOESN'T CEASE TO EXIST! BLINK — TELEPORTER; MIMIC — POWERED BY HIS REALITY'S X-MEN; SUNFIRE — MISTRESS OF FLAME; T-BIRD — SUPER-STRENGTH AND SENSES; NOCTURNE — DAUGHTER OF NIGHTCRAWLER; AND MORPH — SHAPE-CHANGING FUNNY MAN. DESTINED TO FIX THE KINKS IN THE CHAINS OF REALITY, STAN LEE PRESENTS THE

EXILES

He stands well over nine feet tall.

A *half* ton of him.

On most occasions he leaves behind a pile of devastation that makes an *earthquake* look like a *high school prom.*

Then there's the *yelling.* The big man likes to *scream...*

"Hulk *smash!*"

"Hulk smash *puny humans!*"

"Puny humans leave Hulk *alone* or Hulk will *smash!!*"

"Aaaargh!"

A *lot* of that.

So to sum up: He's huge, *real* loud, and rips a path of *pure mayhem* through whatever's in front of him.

Not *exactly* a wallflower. Not your typical needle-in-the-haystack. That being the case...

UP NORTH AND IN THE GREEN
PART 2 OF 2

...you'd *think* he'd be easier to *find*.

GOD, I'M BORED.

BORED, BORED, BORED, BORED, *BORED*...

UH-OH... MAN *OVER-BORED*...

A PUN. *AWFUL*.

YES, MORPH, IT REALLY ISN'T UP TO *YOUR* STANDARDS OF FLATULENCE AND BOOGER-JOKES NOW, IS IT?

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YOU *WOUND* ME, NOCTURNE.

WHEN FASHIONING A JAPE, *NE'ER* DO I DESCEND TO BRUTISH COMPORTMENT. QUITE ANTITHETICALLY, I CONSTRUCT MY RAILLERY WITH A GENTLEMAN'S CONDUCT *EVER* IN MIND.

Uh-huh. I THINK YOU USED "*ANTITHETICALLY*" IN THE WRONG TENSE, *OSCAR WILDE*.

I *CARE*.

LOOK-- MY HEAD'S A *PIG'S BUTT!*

QUIT COMPLAINING. AT LEAST WE GOT THE *DAY* WATCH ON "MONITOR DUTY"...

...THE ALPHA FLIGHTERS HAVE BEEN PRETTY COOL ABOUT NOT SADDLING US EXILES WITH *TOO MUCH* OF THE RESPONSIBILITIES.

THIS WHOLE "PROJECT GOLIATH" SEARCH-FOR-THE-HULK THING COULD BE *A LOT WORSE*.

HOW?!

THAT WE *NOT* FIND THE HULK ANY *LESS?* IT'S A *NULL SET,* BABY!

TWO WEEKS! ***TWO! WEEKS!*** AND NEITHER HIDE NOR GREEN HAIR OF THE EMERALD GIGANTOR!

WHAT DO WE GET TO DO?! WATCH SATELLITE SHOTS OF CANADA-- READ GAMMA RADIATION TRACKING SENSORS! *FUN! FUN! FUN!*

I KNOW. BUT WE DON'T HAVE ANY CHOICE, REALLY. THE *TALLUS* SAID THAT WE'RE SUPPOSED TO HELP ALPHA FLIGHT CAPTURE THE HULK...

...we *don't* and they're all supposed to *die.*

STILL-- WE SHOULDN'T HAVE TO CARRY THEIR WATER, MAN. WE OFFER TO HELP AND SUDDENLY ***WE'RE*** DOING THE DISHES. MONITOR DUTY ***SUCKS.***

AND CANADA, MAN, *CANADA--*

WHAT? WHY ARE YOU ***LOOKING*** AT ME LIKE THAT?

WOLVERINE IS STANDING RIGHT BEHIND ME?

WOLVERINE IS STANDING RIGHT BEHIND YOU.

WHAT I WAS ABOUT TO SAY IS THAT--- *CANADA IS LOVELY! A TREASURE!*

IF WE HAD TO GET STUCK WAITING TO FIND A HUGE STEROID-IRRADIATED BRUTE FOR *WEEKS* AT A TIME, I'D PICK *THIS* ENCHANTING COUNTRY!

BUT MAYBE A SECTION A LITTLE *CLOSER* TO SOME NIGHT LIFE. OR A *MALL*. OR PEOPLE WHO HAVE *BEEN* TO A MALL. *ONCE*.

TJ, FROM WHAT YOU'VE TOLD ME ABOUT YOUR WORLD, YOU GREW UP AT MY KNEE...

...IF YOU *DID*, YOU'D KNOW THAT *WHISPERING* WON'T KEEP ME FROM HEARING.

SO WHAT THE *HELL* IS THIS ABOUT EVERYONE *DYING?*

Meanwhile...

MIMIC, YOU SHOULD JUST *FACE FACTS*. IF THE HULK SHOWS, YOU ARE *NOT* GETTING IN ON THE ACTION.

WE FIGURE I CAN'T TELEPORT HIM BECAUSE OF HIS *RADIATION*, AND THE SAID SAME GAMMA RAYS CAN *KILL* YOU. YOUR ABILITIES TO COPY POWERS ARE WORKING *AGAINST* YOU.

NOT IN *THIS SUIT*, BLINK. ITS SHIELDING CAN *MORE* THAN HANDLE IT. I'LL BE FREE AND CLEAR OF RADIATION.

YEAH, BUT UNLESS YOU'RE ENCASED IN A BLOCK OF *ADAMANTIUM*, THE MOMENT THE HULK MAKES CONTACT WITH YOU THE SUIT'S GOING TO CRACK OR TEAR--

NOT GONNA HAPPEN. IT'S CONSTRUCTED OF A MESH OF TITANIUM AND UNSTABLE MOLECULES--

EXCUSE ME, CALVIN. *BOX?*

RAAACCK!

RAAACCK!

STOP DOING THAT!!

SORRY. I'M A SUCKER FOR A *PRETTY* GIRL.

YOU EVEN HELPED BUILD THIS ONE!! IDIOT!!

YOU'RE *BENCHED*, CALVIN. GO READ A BOOK.

They are the *Exiles' THUNDERBIRD.*

And *Alpha Flight's SHAMAN.*

They are *both JOHN PROUDSTAR.*

From different realities, and walking *very* different paths.

IT'S REALLY *SOMETHING* UP HERE, ISN'T IT?

I SUPPOSE.

YOU *SUPPOSE?* THAT'S AN UNDER-STATEMENT. IT'S *BREATHTAKING.*

IS *THAT* WHAT THIS IS ABOUT? YOU DRAGGED ME UP HERE TO COMMUNE WITH *NATURE?* TO TAP INTO MY SPIRITUAL SELF?

BECAUSE IF YOU'RE HOPING TO BEAT DRUMS, PUT ON THE FACEPAINT, AND *DANCE*-- I *DON'T* NEED A LESSON FROM THE GREAT INDIAN MEDICINE MAN.

I THOUGHT WE'D HAVE *LUNCH.*

TURKEY OR TUNA FISH?

OH.

TUNA'S GOOD.

HOW IS IT?

IT'S OKAY.

THAT'S FUNNY. I CAN *TELL* THAT YOU'RE LYING. DO I REALLY *SOUND* LIKE THAT WHEN I LIE?

IT'S JUST A *SANDWICH,* JOHN. YOU CAN TELL ME YOU DON'T LIKE IT.

IT'S NOT THAT... I JUST DON'T...

...I HAVE NO SENSE OF *TASTE.*

OH.

I AM VERY SORRY TO HEAR THAT.

APOCALYPSE TOOK THAT *AWAY* FROM ME. HE INCREASED MY SENSE OF *SMELL,* THOUGH. I CAN TRACK PRETTY WELL. NOTHING LIKE WOLVERINE OR WOLFSBANE, BUT IT'S SOME COMPENSATION.

...ANYWAY... I LIKE TO SMELL THINGS...

I SUPPOSE THE ABILITY TO TASTE FOOD DOESN'T ENTER IN AS A *HIGH PRIORITY* WHEN YOU'RE GENERATING A CREATURE OF *DEATH.* I DON'T HAVE TO *EAT,* EITHER... OR RATHER I DON'T FEEL HUNGER... I NEVER *TRIED* TO GO WITHOUT FOOD FOR LONG... SO MAYBE I DO, MAYBE I DON'T...

DO YOU REALLY *FEEL* THAT WAY?

LIKE A *CREATURE OF DEATH?*

SURE.

ARE THE MARKINGS-- THE COLORS ON YOUR SKIN-- ARE THEY *TATTOOS?* THEY APPEAR AS IF THEY HAVE A SHEEN TO THEM, BUT STILL LOOK LIKE *FLESH.*

NO, NOT TATTOOS. TO THE TOUCH, IT FEELS LIKE A THICKENED LAYER OF *SKIN...* BUT THEY'RE ACTUALLY *PLATES.* THEY GET HARDER THAN STEEL WHEN I GO INTO *"BATTLE" MODE.*

THEY'RE... um... *RETRACTABLE,* AS WELL.

MAY I?

MAY YOU *WHAT?*

MAY I SEE YOU WITH THE PLATES RETRACTED?

SHECK-SHECK-SHECK-SHECK-SHECK-SHECK-

SO, NOW YOU'VE SEEN.

THIS IS ME.

IT ISN'T *WHO* YOU ARE, JOHN.

IT'S WHAT'S BEEN *DONE* TO YOU.

WHO DO THAT TO YOU?

SCIENTISTS?

SCIENTISTS AND SOLDIERS ALWAYS BOTHER HULK.

HULK NEVER BOTHER SCIENTISTS AND SOLDIERS.

THEY DO THAT?

NO.

IT WAS A *MONSTER*...

...A MONSTER DID THIS TO ME...

...MADE *ME* A MONSTER.

HULK CALLED "MONSTER"... HULK NOT *FEEL* LIKE MONSTER... FEEL LIKE... FEEL *TIRED.*

NO ONE *HERE* THINKS YOU'RE A MONSTER, HULK. AND IF YOU LIKE, WE CAN HELP YOU FIND A PLACE TO REST.

NO SOLDIERS. NO SCIENTISTS.

JUST *FRIENDS.*

HULK GO WITH YOU?

GOOD GOD, THEY'RE *BONDING*. IT'S LIKE A MEN'S MOVEMENT SEMINAR!

TEN MORE MINUTES AND THEY'LL BE *CRYING* AND "*SPEAKING THE NAME OF THEIR FATHERS*"!

LET'S JUST *JUMP* THEM AND GET IT OVER WITH, SABRETOOTH!

HELL, NO... THAT'S THE *LAST* THING WE OUGHTA DO.

THIS IS *ALL BAD*, DEADPOOL. WE WANT THEM TO *BEAT* THAT THING DOWN INTO *SUBMISSION*.

YEAH, THEY'RE GETTING ALL *WARM* AND *FUZZY* WITH HIM. *UNBELIEVABLE*... A CREATURE OF *PURE RAGE* AND THEY'RE GONNA INVITE HIM HOME FOR *SUPPER!*

TRUE ENOUGH. AND IF WE GET IN THE WAY, BIG GREEN'LL GO *NUCLEAR* AND TAKE IT OUT ON *US*.

SO, WE GO WITH THE *OBVIOUS* MOVE.

OH YEAH. PURE *WEAPON X* STYLE.

SHOOT HULK IN THE *HEAD*.

HULK NOT WANT *BANNER* AROUND.

BUT HIM NOT BE AROUND FOR A WHILE... HULK NOT KNOW WHY...

WE CAN HELP YOU WITH THAT IF THAT'S WHAT YOU *WANT*.

HULK, ALL WE WANT TO DO IS *HELP* YOU-- WE DON'T MEAN YOU ANY HARM.

NOW, IF YOU JUST FOLLOW US, WE--

AAARRH!

NO!

VERY NICELY DONE, DEADPOOL.

WELL, THANK YOU *VERY* MUCH.

LIES!! HUMANS ALWAYS TELL LIES!!

AAAARRRGH!

NO, HULK-- WE DIDN'T--!!

IT'S *TOO LATE* FOR THAT, SHAMAN! HE'S GONE *BERSERK*--!

GET THE OTHERS!!

CRACK!

IT'S *NEVER* TOO LATE FOR A *PERCEFUL SOLUTION*, JOHN! BUT I AGREE, WE DO NEED *HELP!*

Heather Hudson, Alpha Flight Lt. Field Commander and Head of Science

YOU DID *WHAT?!* *TELL ME* YOU DIDN'T REALLY SEND BETA THROUGH GAMMA FLIGHT TO AUSTRALIA!

James MacDonald Hudson, Alpha Flight Commander.

HE DID. PILED THEM *ALL* ONTO THREE OF THE *FLIGHT HAWK* JETS. THEY'RE GONE, MAC.

Wolverine, Alpha Flight Field Commander

THEY WERE *NEEDED*, HUDSON. THE FANTASTIC FOUR ARE WORKING OUT SOME MASSIVE RELOCATION PROGRAM WITH NAMOR AND THE KINGDOM OF ATLANTIS. HE'S GOT HIS *SPEEDO* IN A BUNCH ABOUT SOMETHING...

...DON'T TRY AND CONVINCE ME THAT THERE WASN'T *ANY OTHER WAY*. IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T BEEN LISTENING THERE'S AN EXCELLENT CHANCE, A NEAR *CERTAIN* ONE, THAT THE WHOLE CREW WAS GOING TO GET *ICED* CARRYING OUT THIS TURKEY SHOOT TO NAIL THE *HULK*.

THESE NOMADS' *WHOLE REASON* FOR BEING HERE IS TO *AVOID* THAT EVENTUALITY.

I SENT THE *LESS EXPERIENCED* GROUPS OUT OF HARM'S WAY. THE *ALPHAS* WILL HAVE TO TAKE THE BRUNT OF THE DUTY. IF ANYONE'S GETTING PUT OUT OF COMMISSION, IT'S GONNA BE *US*.

THERE ARE NO *GENERALS* IN THIS OUTFIT. WE ALL STRAP ON A GUN AND HEAD IN. AND I AM NOT SENDING *ANYONE* INTO A CERTAIN DEATH.

BUT THAT STILL DOESN'T EXPLAIN WHY *YOU PEOPLE* CHOSE TO KEEP THIS TO *YOURSELVES!!*

WE *TRUSTED* YOU!

I THINK OUR MOTIVES ARE *OBVIOUS*, AREN'T THEY?

YEAH, *SELF-PRESERVATION!* YOU COMPLETE THE MISSION AND MOVE ON!

NO, LOGAN--QUITE THE *OPPOSITE*.

THEY HAVE TO MAINTAIN A CERTAIN *BALANCE*. IF THEY TAMPER TOO GREATLY WITH A TIMELINE... THEN IT MIGHT ALTER THE OUTCOME EVEN *FURTHER*. IF IT WERE ME, I WOULD HAVE KEPT US IN THE DARK, AS WELL.

STILL, WHO KNOWS, LOGAN? MAYBE YOU WERE *DESTINED* TO SEND THEM ALL AWAY... DWINDLE OUR NUMBERS... CUT OUR STRENGTH BY A THIRD... AND *THAT'S* HOW WE ALL GET KILLED.

DOUBTFUL. THE HULK WOULD HAVE TO *SHOW UP* FIRST TO MAKE THAT HAPPEN. WE'VE BEEN S TTING ON OUR CANS FOR *WEEKS* WAITING FOR TH S ID\OCY TO KICK INTO H GH GEAR.

THOSE BUREAUCRATIC CHIMPANZEES WANTED GOOD *PR*, SO WE GOTTA GO CATCH THE HULK.

JUST FOLLOW ORDERS.

AND WHAT DO WE *REALLY HAVE?* NO HULK AND [illegible]

COMMANDERS-- WE'VE GOT A *LOCK!*

WE HAVE THE *HULK!* ON SCANNERS, ON SATELLITE AND PROUDSTAR SENT UP A FLARE. HE AND THUNDER-B RD ARE SCUFFLING WITH HIM RIGHT NOW. *LET'S GO!*

FINE.

MY BAD.

IDIOT.

OH, WHAT THE @#$%& ARE YOU GOING TO DO?

FIRE ME?

HULK THOUGHT YOU SAME AS HULK!

NOT LIKE HULK AT ALL!!

KA-KOOM!

IF I CAN ONLY RENDER HIM *IMMOBILE*, I CAN RELEASE A DAYLIGHT ENCHANTMENT AND *CALM* HIM.

...SO LET'S TRY TO *SLOW HIM DOWN.*

AAHARGH!

CRAAAACK!

FAST WORK, SHAMAN! LET'S *FINISH HIM OFF* WHILE WE STILL--

AAAARGH!

CLAP!

HULK STOP NOW!!

NO!! HULK STOP MONSTER MAN!!

Apocalypse did not *arbitrarily* choose John Proudstar to become one of his four Horsemen.

He *specifically* chose him. And he selected him to become *War.*

War can be described as *many* things.

Powerful

World changing

Senseless.

An atrocity

Apocalypse saw in Thunderbird his *potential.*

He saw an individual of such *remarkable* resolve, passion and desire... and a young man who had been *twisted* by his own self-hatred and guilt

Apocalypse knew that to *tap into* that emotion in its rawest form and *unleash* it--

He would have his War.

But War can be *unpredictable*...

...and quite *deadly*, as well.

Shaman, who stands twenty feet away, feels the *vibrations* of each blow.

They killed a *bear* that day

But not with *guns.*

They rattle around his body like *thunderclaps.*

He thinks about a *hunt* his father had taken him on as a boy. He was all of fifteen.

His father had them bring it down with *crossbows.*

It was *insanity.* It was *stupid.* They were almost *killed.*

The bear, his hide full of bolts and a seething mindless *anger* exploding in its heart, was upon them in *moments.*

Young John Proudstar had just begun to *mature* into the powerful mutant he would soon become

Without thinking, John spun on his heels, seized the bear by the head, and *broke* its neck.

He was just as *surprised* as his father.

But more surprised at his father's *rage.*

His *shame.*

And as this memory taps quietly into Shaman's head, he wonders if *this* John Proudstar, this *fractured image* of himself from another world, went on the same hunt with his father.

...And if he is thinking of it now, as well.

GRRRRRRHRRRRRRR--!

JOHN, IT'S *OVER!*

HE'S *NOT* GETTING UP!

RAAAAAAARRRGH!!

HYA!

JOHN!!

LET GO OF THE RAGE!!

REMEMBER WHO YOU ARE!!!

GRRRRRRRRRRRRR...

YOU ARE A MAN.

A MAN.

REMEMBER OUR *MOTHER'S FACE* AND COME BACK TO HER.

...THANK YOU, SHAMAN.

NO THANKS ARE NEEDED, MY BROTHER.

OKAY, TIME TO *MOVE IN.*

WE TAKE THE *BIG GUY* OUT FIRST?

YES. THE INSTRUCTIONS WERE TO *"BRING IN THE HULK"* AND TO *"MAKE USE OF THE OTHERS"*. THAT MUST MEAN TO *ADD* SOME TO OUR TEAM-- WHETHER THEY LIKE IT OR *NOT.*

BLINK!

THERE! THE REST HAVE ARRIVED. NOW--

--oh my God.

She's here. I didn't... didn't *see* her before... didn't *smell* her...

...and on her wrist... it looks like the *Tallus.*

WHO'S HERE, SABES? WHO'S GOT A TALLUS?

CLARICE.

"MY CLARICE... I'D SWEAR IT..."

...SHE'S ALIVE.

Epilogue.

Level D of the Alpha Flight Research Facility.

Medical personnel, radiation specialists, and anthropologists from all over the globe work round the clock on a very *unique* patient.

Reed Richards, Tony Stark and Doctor Leonard Samson are en route.

A certain field commander got a *chewing out* from the Prime Minister of Canada for abusing authority and ignoring the chain of command.

A certain field commander *hung up* on him.

Not far away, a discussion between two young men with *old souls*...

DESPITE SOME OF THE UN-PLEASANTNESS... I MUST SAY I HAVE *ENJOYED* STEPPING INTO THIS REALITY.

MEETING *YOU*, MOST SPECIFICALLY.

THE FEELING IS *MUTUAL*, JOHN.

IT'S NOT OFTEN YOU GET TO TALK TO *YOUR-SELF* WITHOUT IT BEING PARANOIA OR SOME PSYCHOTIC EPISODE.

WELL, I *DID* HAVE A PSYCHOTIC EPISODE, BUT I GET YOUR MEANING.

YOU KNOCKED OUT THE *HULK*, TOO. THAT DOESN'T STINK.

TRUE.

BUT YOU WON'T HEAR ME GOING ON ABOUT IT LIKE *SUSAN RICHARDS* DOES.

ISN'T THAT THE TRUTH? SHE SHOULD JUST HAVE BUSINESS CARDS THAT SAY "*SUE RICHARDS - INVISIBLE WOMAN - KNOCKED OUT THE HULK.*"

AH, WE SHOULDN'T BE *TOO* HARD ON HER. LAME POWERS.

LAME POWERS...

Montreal.

Club Maup'n.

The Tallus spoke to a team of beleaguered wanderers and gave them a countdown of *twelve hours* before they left this reality.

Calvin Rankin chatted up an airborne speedster and convinced him to let him *mimic* his power of *flight*.

At first Northstar thought he was *hitting* on him.

C'est la vie...

The remainder hit the *dance floor*.

It would be fun but uneventful...

...except for Morph becoming an all-too *familiar* face, signing autographs and making the tabloids...

...(John Travolta would later *swear* he was in Wisconsin shooting a movie).

Meanwhile, Victor Creed's *heart* would hang *heavy*.

His life had always taken *unusual* turns... but recently, more than ever.

Plucked out of his own crumbling timeline from THE AGE OF APOCALYPSE and forced to hop realities to set things right...

...hoping his *Tallus* would explain to him *why* they had to teleport out of this world even though they *failed* their mission...

...and why this Clarice, his *child* if he ever had one, was saddled with the *same burden*.

BLINK

And why... oh, why... he couldn't be with her.

END.